Claims

Children of the Children of th

[c1]

1.A wireless communication system, comprising:

a programmable interface operable to communicate data from a device to a transmitter in accordance with a communication protocol; and a programming system selectively coupleable to the interface to enable a wireless communication system user to program the interface to communicate with any one of a plurality of devices using different communication protocols to communicate data.

[c2]

2. The system as recited in claim 1, wherein the interface is operable to be programmed to communicate with a first device using a first communication protocol and then to be re-programmed to communicate with a second device using a second communication protocol.

[c3]

3. The system as recited in claim 2, wherein the programming system comprises a computer system that enables a user to direct the selection of programming provided to the interface.

[c4]

4. The system as recited in claim 3, wherein the programming system comprises a database of devices and programming to enable the interface to communicate with a device in the database of devices.

[c5]

5. The system as fecited in claim 1, wherein the interface comprises a first electrical connector configured for mating engagement with an external electrical connector selectively coupleable to the programming system.

[c6]

6. The system as recited in claim as recited in claim 1, wherein the transmitter comprises a transponder operable to receive a first signal at a first frequency and to transmit a second signal at a second frequency.

[c7]

7. The system as recited in claim 1, wherein the interface comprises a second electrical connector configured for mating engagement with the transmitter.

[c8]

8. The system as recited in claim 1, further comprising a cell controller and an antenna coupled to the cell controller, wherein the antenna is operable to

transmit a first signal to the transmitter and to receive a second signal from the transmitter. [c9] 9. The system as recited in claim 1, wherein the interface comprises memory to store the programming provided by the programming system. [c10]10. The system as recited in claim 9, wherein the interface further comprises a processor doupled to the device and to memory, wherein the processor executes the programming stored in memory to communicate device data to the transmitter. [c11] 11. The system as recited in claim 8, wherein the cell controller is coupled to an information system. [c12] 12. The system as recited in claim 6, wherein the interface and the transmitter are housed within a single housing. [c13] 13.A programmable interface for a wireless communication system, comprising: a first electrical connector operable to couple the programmable interface to a programming device, wherein the programmable interface is operable to receive programming from the programming device to enable the programmable interface to communicate with a plurality of electrical devices using different dommunication formats. [c14]14. The program mable interface as recited in claim 13, wherein the data comprises an operating parameter of an asset. 15. The programmable interface as recited in claim 13, further comprising a [c15] second electrical connector to couple the programmable interface to an electrical device. 16.The programmable interface as recited in claim 13, further comprising a [c16]

third electrical connector to couple the programmable interface to the

transmitter.

	·
[c17]	17.The programmable interface as recited in claim 13, wherein the
	transmitter is a transponder.
[c18]	18.A wireless communication system, comprising:
	a cell controller;
	a plurality of antennas electrically coupled to the cell controller, each
\mathcal{O}_{\prime}	antenna being operable to transmit a/first signal and to receive a second
*	signal;
	a transmitter operable to receive the first signal and to transmit the second
	signal; and
	an interface electrically coupled between an asset and a transmitter to
	communicate asset data to the transmitter for transmission as a portion of
	the second signal, wherein the interface is programmable by a wireless
	communication system user to enable the interface to communicate with an
	asset and a transmitter using different communication protocols.
[c19]	19.The system as/recited in claim 18, further comprising a programming unit
	operable to program the interface to communicate using a selected
	communication protocol.
[c20]	20.The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the communication protocol is
[620]	selected by selecting a desired asset to communicate with the interface.
	selected by selecting a desired asset to communicate with the internace.
[c21]	21. The system as recited in claim 18, wherein the asset data is an operating
	parameter of the asset.
[c22]	22.The system as recited in claim 21, wherein the operating parameter is the
[022]	operating status of the asset.
	operating status of the asset.
[c23]	23. The system as recited in claim 18, wherein the transmitter and interface
	are/integrated into a single unit.
[624]	
[c24]	24.A method of using a common interface to couple a plurality of assets
	using different communication formats to a wireless communication system,
	comprising the acts of:

operating a programming station to program a first common interface with information to enable the first common interface to communicate with a first asset;

operating the programming station to program a second common interface with information to enable the second interface to communicate with a second asset; and

coupling the first common interface between the first asset and a first transmitter to communicate information from the first asset to the first transmitter and coupling the second common interface between the second asset and a second transmitter to communicate information from the second asset to the second transmitter.

25. The method as recited in claim 24, further comprising the act of operating the wireless communication system to obtain information from the first and second assets.

26. The method as recited in claim 24, further comprising the act of securing the first common interface to the first asset.

27. The method as recited in claim 24, wherein the transmitter is a transponder, further comprising the act of connecting an RF tag to the first common interface.

28. The method as recited in claim 24, further comprising the act of reprogramming the first common interface with programming from the programming device to enable the first common interface to communicate with a different asset.

29.A method of enabling a user to program a common interface to communicate medical asset data from a plurality of different medical assets using a wireless communication system, comprising the acts of: programming a first common interface with information from a programming station to enable the first common interface to communicate with a first medical asset; and

[c25]

[c26]

[c27]

[c28]

[c29]

coupling the first common interface between the first medical asset and a first transmitter to communicate medical asset data from the first medical asset to a first transmitter.

30. The method as recited in claim 29, further comprising the acts of:

[c30]

programming a second common interface with information from a programming station to enable the second interface to communicate with a second medical asset, and

Ø,

coupling the second common interface between the second medical asset and a second transmitter to communicate information from the second asset to the second transmitter

31. The method as recited in claim 29, further comprising the act of operating the wireless communication system to obtain medical asset data.

[c31]

32. The method as recited in claim 29, further comprising the act of securing the first common interface to the first asset.

[c32]

33. The method as recited in claim 29, wherein the transmitter is a transponder, further comprising the act of connecting an RF tag to the first common interface.